



**State of Connecticut**  
**African-American Affairs Commission**

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## Chairperson's Testimony

February 19, 2011

**Chairperson**

*Dr. Fred Pierre-Louis*

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**Executive Director**

*Glenn A. Cassis*

**Senior Legislative Analyst**

**Senior Legislative Secretary**

*Denise Drummond*

**Members of the Appropriations Committee:**

I apologize that I could not be with you in person to deliver my testimony on behalf of the African-American Affairs Commission. It is with great pride that I submit this testimony on behalf of the AAAC because we have worked tirelessly on the multi-faceted issues that have plagued our community. I am even more proud of our operational staff for accomplishing so much with so little.

The AAAC truly empathizes with you because, on the one hand, you have the task to balance the budget or at least reduce the deficit; on the other hand, you have the power to influence and/or decide the fate of many commissions. I trust that you would use a surgical approach when making your decision while considering that the African-American Affairs Commission has a unique and pivotal stage and is an extension of the General Assembly. Therefore, make an incision if you must but let the Commission stand as a beacon of hope for the African-Americans in the State of Connecticut.

The reason that the commission was put together was to give the African Americans a voice and a connection to you. Some might think that we have arrived because we have made great progress as a people. Yes, we've made some progress. However, when we look at the glaring disparities that persist in our communities in relation to other groups concerning health, education, prison population, violence in the neighborhood and at home, we must deduct that our progress is not enough.

I trust that my voice was heard this morning with the full understanding that you have some tough decisions to make. That's why I would like to reiterate, let the African American Affairs Commission continue to live with the life that was given it by the General Assembly so it may continue positively impact the community it serves.

May God bless you, may God bless our great State.

Thank you.

Fred Pierre-Louis, Ed.D.  
Chairperson